Your pleasure was my mere offence[7], my punishment
Itself, and all my treason ; that I suffer'd, Was all the harm I did.
These gentle princes (For such, and so they are,) these twenty years Have I train'd up: those arts they have, as I Could put into them ; my breeding was, sir, as Your highness knows. Their nurse, Euriphile, Whom for the theft I wedded, stole these children Upon my banishment: I mov'd her to't; Having receiv'd the punishment before, For that which I did then : Beaten for loyalty Excited me to treason : Their dear loss, The more of you 'twas felt, the more it shap'd Unto my end of stealing them. But, gracious sir, Here are your sons again; and I must lose Two of the sweet'st companions in the world:— The benediction of these covering heavens Fall on their heads like dew ! for they are worthy To inlay heaven with stars [8].

7 Your pleasure was my MERE offence, &c.] [Modern editors *near.]* I think this passage may better be read thus :

** Your pleasure was my *dear* offence, my punishment ** Itself *was* all my treason ; that I suffer'd, " Was all the harm I did."

The offence which cost me so dear was only your caprice. My sufferings have been all my crime. JOHNSON.

The reading of the old copies, though corrupt, is generally nearer to the truth than that of the later editions, which, for the most part, adopt the orthography of their respective ages.

Dr. Johnson would read—dear offence. In the folio it is *neere;* which plainly points out to us the true reading—meere, as the word was then spelt. TYRWHITT.

My crime, my punishment, and all the treason that I committed, originated in and were founded on, your caprice only.

MALONE.

I have adopted Mr. Tyrwhitt's very judicious emendation ; which is also commended by Mr. Malone. STEEVENS.

8 To inlay HEAVEN with STARS.] So, in Romeo and Juliet;

" Take him and cut him into little *stars,*
" And he will make the face *of heaven so fine"*
&c.

STEEVENS.